



# Everglades Coalition

## A RESOLUTION OF THE EVERGLADES COALITION IN OPPOSITION TO DEVELOPMENT OF A COMMERCIAL SPACE COMPLEX WITHIN THE MERRITT ISLAND NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE AND ADJACENT TO THE INDIAN RIVER LAGOON

1000 FRIENDS OF FLORIDA  
ARTHUR R. MARSHALL FOUNDATION  
AUDUBON FLORIDA  
AUDUBON SOCIETY OF THE EVERGLADES  
AUDUBON OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA  
CALOOSAHATCHEE RIVER CITIZENS  
ASSOCIATION / RIVERWATCH  
CENTER FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY  
CLEAN WATER ACTION  
COLLIER COUNTY AUDUBON SOCIETY  
CONSERVANCY OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA  
DEFENDERS OF WILDLIFE  
DING DARLING WILDLIFE SOCIETY  
EARTHJUSTICE  
ENVIRONMENT FLORIDA  
EVERGLADES COORDINATING COUNCIL  
EVERGLADES FOUNDATION  
EVERGLADES LAW CENTER  
FLORIDA CONSERVATION ALLIANCE  
FLORIDA DEFENDERS OF THE  
ENVIRONMENT  
FLORIDA KEYS ENVIRONMENTAL FUND  
FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY  
FLORIDA OCEANOGRAPHIC SOCIETY  
FLORIDA WILDLIFE FEDERATION  
FRIENDS OF THE ARTHUR R. MARSHALL  
LOXAHATCHEE WILDLIFE REFUGE  
FRIENDS OF THE EVERGLADES  
HENDRY GLADES AUDUBON SOCIETY  
INSTITUTE FOR REGIONAL  
CONSERVATION  
IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE FLORIDA  
DIVISION  
IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE FLORIDA KEYS  
CHAPTER  
IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE MANGROVE  
CHAPTER  
IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE OF AMERICA  
LAST STAND  
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF FLORIDA  
LOXAHATCHEE RIVER COALITION  
MARTIN COUNTY CONSERVATION  
ALLIANCE  
NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY  
NATIONAL PARKS CONSERVATION  
ASSOCIATION  
NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION  
NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE  
ASSOCIATION  
NATURAL RESOURCES DEFENSE  
COUNCIL  
REEF RELIEF  
SANIBEL-CAPTIVA CONSERVATION  
FOUNDATION  
SAVE IT NOW, GLADES!  
SIERRA CLUB  
SIERRA CLUB BROWARD GROUP  
SIERRA CLUB CALUSA GROUP  
SIERRA CLUB CENTRAL FLORIDA GROUP  
SIERRA CLUB FLORIDA CHAPTER  
SIERRA CLUB LOXAHATCHEE GROUP  
SIERRA CLUB MIAMI GROUP  
SNOOK AND GAMEFISH FOUNDATION  
SOUTH FLORIDA AUDUBON SOCIETY  
TROPICAL AUDUBON SOCIETY  
THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT LEAGUE OF  
GREATER MIAMI

WHEREAS, The Indian River Lagoon is the most biologically diverse estuary in North America and the environmental health, wildlife and habitat of this complex ecological system is linked to the Greater Everglades Ecosystem, and

WHEREAS, The Indian River Lagoon has been described as an estuary in environmental crisis evidenced in part by the death of approximately 250 manatees, 76 dolphins, 250 pelicans, and 47,000 acres of sea grass during 2013, and,

WHEREAS, within the Lagoon lies the Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge which is estimated to have the largest number of endangered and threatened species of any national wildlife refuge in the continental United States, and

WHEREAS, protection of adjacent natural areas in close proximity to the Greater Everglades Ecosystem is important for the success of diversity and abundance of wildlife, and

WHEREAS, the Everglades is recognized globally for its unique biological diversity, and

WHEREAS, Federal, State and Local Governments have invested millions of dollars in public conservation areas to protect the Indian River Lagoon including Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge, Canaveral National Seashore, Archie Carr National Wildlife Refuge, Hobe Sound National Wildlife Refuge, and Pelican Island the nation's first wildlife refuge, and

WHEREAS, The State of Florida through Space Florida has petitioned the Federal Government to release 200 acres within the Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge (the Refuge is situated on land owned by NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration)) and adjacent to Canaveral National Seashore, for development of a commercial launch facility called Shiloh Launch Complex and has filed for a license from the FAA to operate a private launch facility to launch rockets across the Indian River Lagoon, and

WHEREAS, the proposed launch facilities including fuel loading and storage facilities within a national wildlife refuge and ten miles outside the existing Kennedy Space Center poses an unprecedented threat to the integrity of the National Wildlife Refuge System and launching rockets across Canaveral National Seashore also poses an unprecedented threat to the National Park System, and

WHEREAS, constructing and operating a launch pad at the Shiloh site would harm many imperiled species due to direct elimination/destruction of habitat and many forms of habitat degradation, such as by reducing the Refuge's ability to conduct prescribed burns, artificial lighting on sea turtle and shorebird nesting and resting habitat, pollution, human activity disturbing and causing species to avoid the vicinity; increasing road and boat traffic which could result in mortalities due to collisions with vehicles and watercraft; and the incalculable risk of catastrophic launch failure, and

WHEREAS, endangered, threatened and special concern species that would likely be harmed include, but are not limited, to the Florida scrub jay, eastern indigo snake, piping plover, roseate tern, Southeastern beach mouse, Atlantic salt marsh snake, wood stork, gopher tortoise and the loggerhead, green, leatherback, Kemp's ridley and hawksbill sea turtles, American bald eagle, migratory birds and more, and

WHEREAS, sufficient space related launch infrastructure currently exists within the Kennedy Space Center, and NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) has demonstrated a willingness to enter into agreements to make private enterprise sites available,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Everglades Coalition opposes the development of the Shiloh Space Complex within the Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge, an essential contributor to the health of the Greater Everglades Ecosystem, because of threats to public lands, wildlife, and the Indian River Lagoon; and urges action be taken to explore alternative launch sites at NASA's Kennedy Space Center.



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